

*Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* Reichen. Vög. Afrikas, ii. p. 679 (1903).

Bo, January 1904. Eyes bright yellow ring; bill black; feet and claws dark slate-coloured.

143. *ORIOLOUS NIGRIPENNIS*.

*Oriolus nigripennis* Verr.; Reichen. Vög. Afrikas, ii. p. 661 (1903).

♂ ♀. Bo, February 1904. Irides blood-red; bill reddish; feet and claws blue slate-coloured.

144. *DICRURUS AFER*.

*Dicrurus afer* (Licht.); Reichen. Vög. Afrikas, ii. p. 646 (1903).

Bo, May and August 1903. Bill, feet, and claws black; irides blood-red.

145. *CORVUS SCAPULATUS*.

*Corvus scapulatus* Daud.; Reichen. Vög. Afrikas, ii. p. 634 (1903).

Rotifunk, 1902.

Bo, 1903.

Common at both places.

XXI.—*Ornithological Results of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition*.—I. *On the Birds of Gough Island, South Atlantic Ocean*. By WM. EAGLE CLARKE, F.B.S.E., F.L.S.

(Plate VI.)

WHEN homeward bound from the farthest southern point reached—the newly discovered Coats-Land—the Scottish Antarctic Expedition paid a flying visit to Gough Island, and made the collection of birds here described. This contains forty-five specimens, and, with the Antarctic birds, has been placed in my hands for identification and record.

Gough Island, or, to speak more correctly, Diego Alvarez (for such it was named by its Portuguese discoverers), is situated in lat. 40° 19' S. and long. 9° 44' W. It lies far out in the South Atlantic Ocean, being some 1500

Text-fig. 16.



OUTLINE MAP SHOWING THE POSITION OF GOUGH ISLAND.

miles W. by S. of the Cape of Good Hope and about 2000 miles N. by E. of Cape Horn; and, with the Tristan da Cunha group, which lie over 200 miles to the northwards, is among the most remote of all Oceanic islands. It is small and uninhabited; of volcanic origin; from seven to eight miles long, and from three to four wide; and is lofty, rising to a height of 4380 feet.

The island has been but little visited, except by sealers, who, in days gone by, found it worthy of their attention; and the 'Scotia's' party were the first naturalists who have ever set foot upon its fastnesses.

I greatly regret that owing to Mr. Bruce's breakdown in health his notes are not available for incorporation here, but I have to thank his colleagues, Dr. Harvey Pirie and Mr. R. N. Rudmose Brown, for the following description of the island, and also, with Mr. D. W. Wilton, for other valuable information:—

"Gough Island rises on every side abruptly from the ocean in sheer precipices several hundred feet high. The general aspect of the island, as seen from ship-board, is very beautiful, with its green slopes and moss- and lichen-covered cliffs, over which numbers of rushing waterfalls shoot out into the sea with a drop of several hundred feet. The only apparent landing-place is on the eastern side, where the party from the 'Scotia' landed. Here a ravine runs down from the interior to the coast and along it flows a small stream. Near the seaward end of this ravine are a few acres of level ground covered with grass or, in the moister parts, with ferns and rankly growing celery and docks. Here, too, is a narrow beach, perhaps a hundred yards long, strewn with many large boulders and numerous fern-rhizomes of considerable size. At the S.W. end of the island there appears to be a plateau of about half a square mile in extent at an elevation of some 300 feet, but everywhere else the island rises into steep ridges separated by narrow valleys, which must render its exploration a matter of extreme difficulty. On the lower ground and up to a height of over 1000 feet the island is thickly covered with

tussock-grass (*Spartina arundinacea*) and buckthorn-trees (*Phytica nitida*): the former spread profusely over the

Text-fig. 17.



VEGETATION, GOUGH ISLAND.

steeper slopes, and the latter gnarled and stunted, yet growing vigorously even on the most exposed ridges.

These trees appear hardly to rise beyond twenty feet in height and generally bear a thick growth of lichens on their stems. Under the waterfalls and along the sheltered banks

Text-fig. 18.



RAVINE, GOUGH ISLAND.

of the streams ferns and mosses grow in luxuriance. More than the general aspect of the vegetation on the higher ground could not be determined, but the very summit of

the island seemed by its green appearance to be clothed with mosses and lichens."

To this description may be added a few items culled from Mr. Comer's notes, to which reference will be made more particularly anon. He tells us that there are two kinds of trees on the island, one of which is quite plentiful, but the other is scarce. These, though stunted, are dense in some places, and retain their leaves all the year round. The thick bushes, he says, extend up to an elevation of about 2000 feet, while the grass and brakes grow very rankly and make walking extremely difficult.

According to the 'Report on the Fisheries and Fishing Industries of the United States,' vol. ii. p. 415 (1887), Gough "island at one time abounded in fur-seals and sea-elephants, but is now almost deserted by those animals. About 1825 a party of American sealers lived there, but met with such indifferent success that the station was abandoned."

The few accounts agree that, owing to the weather-conditions usually prevailing, landing on Gough Island is a matter of great difficulty. In the case of the 'Scotia,' three days were spent off the island, during which her staff, after landing under the most trying conditions, were only able to remain ashore about four hours. This was on the 22nd of April, 1904.

Previous to this visit only twelve species of birds had been identified as forming the avifauna of the island. The naturalists of the 'Scotia' observed or secured examples of nineteen species, and added no less than twelve to the ornithology of the island, of which two, or possibly three, are new to science. The total avifauna now stands at twenty-three species.

Only three terrestrial forms are known, all of which are peculiar species—namely, two Buntings of the genus *Nesospiza* and a flightless Gallinule, *Porphyriornis comeri*.

The two species of *Nesospiza* are the most interesting, not, however, because they are novelties, nor because we owe our knowledge of them to the researches of the Scottish Expedition, but because they differ very considerably from their single congener, *N. acunhae*, peculiar to Tristan da

Cuula, where it is now confined to Inaccessible Island, though it was formerly also found on the main island of the group.

The Gough Island birds of this genus differ remarkably among themselves, and whether they represent two species or only one in various stages of plumage is a matter on which opinions differ. At first I was under the impression that they were representatives, sexual or otherwise, of a single species, but an examination of the material revealed characters which it was difficult to reconcile with such an opinion, and which led me to describe them as two species. My reasons for doing so will be explained in the systematic portion of this contribution.

The Gallinule or "Island Hen" (*Porphyriornis comeri*) appears to differ only slightly from the species (*P. nesiotis*) found on Tristan Island; though, on the other hand, both of them would seem, if report is to be relied upon, to be widely different from the representative of the family found on Inaccessible Island (see Moseley, "Naturalist on the 'Challenger,'" p. 122).

These three terrestrial endemic birds are, moreover, representatives of genera entirely unknown elsewhere except in Tristan da Cunha; and thus Gough Island, though lying over 200 miles to the south, must be looked upon ornithologically as an outlier of the Tristan group. The relationship is, however, somewhat remote, for the Buntings found on Inaccessible and Gough Islands are specifically very distinct; and Tristan possesses a peculiar genus of Thrush, *Nesocichla*, with a single species (*N. eremita*), which is not at present known to have any representative on Gough Island.

The other birds forming the ornis of Gough Island are mostly Tubinares. The number of species of this Order observed during the short visit of the 'Scotia' is quite remarkable, and it would seem probable that a thorough investigation of the island—as yet almost untrodden by the foot of man—in the summer-season would reveal the fact that it is a perfect paradise as a breeding-station for

“Petrels.” Indeed, one species of Albatros (*Thalassogeron eximius*) has not been obtained elsewhere.

The only previous contribution to our knowledge of the avifauna of the island is, I believe, contained in a communication by Mr. G. E. Verrill to the ‘Transactions of the Connecticut Academy,’ based upon the collections and experiences of Mr. George Comer. Mr. Comer resided on Gough Island from the 22nd of August, 1888, until the 23rd of January, 1889, and was engaged, along with others, in the capture of seals. During this period he got together a very creditable ornithological collection, and among his specimens were two birds which proved to be new to science, namely, the flightless Gallinule (*Porphyriornis comeri*) and an Albatros (*Thalassogeron eximius*). Mr. Comer’s notes are of considerable interest, and I have not hesitated to make use of them where desirable. I have also included the names of the very few species observed by him of which examples were not obtained or noted by Mr. Bruce and his colleagues, in order to render my account of the avifauna of this most interesting and little-known isle as complete as possible: these are given within square brackets.

The date of the visit of the ‘Scotia’ to the island was not the best for ornithological work, April being mid-autumn in the Southern Hemisphere. Unfortunately, too, the state of the weather did not permit of more than a few hours being spent ashore, and even then the party could not proceed far inland, owing to the uncertainty of the prevailing meteorological conditions. Under these circumstances the members of the Expedition are to be congratulated upon having accomplished so much good work.

The colours of the bills and feet, when given, are taken from a series of carefully prepared drawings made at the time of capture of the various birds by Mr. Cuthbertson, the artist to the Expedition.

The few species in the following list the identification of which I consider doubtful are not numbered.

I have to thank Mr. W. P. Pycraft for having most obligingly examined certain material submitted to him, and for giving me his valuable opinion thereon.



I shall have occasion to make several references to the following works, in addition to other literature :—

- CARMICHAEL.—Some Account of the Island of Tristan da Cunha and of its Natural Productions. By Captain DUGALD CARMICHAEL, F.L.S. Trans. Linn. Soc. xii. pp. 483–513 (1817).
- THOMSON.—Voyage of the ‘Challenger.’ The Atlantic. By Sir C. WYVILLE THOMSON. Vol. ii. (1877).
- VERRILL.—On some Birds and Eggs collected by Mr. George Comer at Gough Island, Kerguelen Island, and the Island of South Georgia, with Extracts from his Notes, &c. By G. E. VERRILL. Trans. Connecticut Acad. ix. pp. 430–478 (1895).
- SALVIN.—Catalogue of Birds in the British Museum. Vol. xxv. (Tubinares) (1896).

1. NESOSPIZA GOUGHENSIS. (Plate VI. fig. 2.)

*Nesospiza goughensis*, Eagle Clarke, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, xv. p. 18.

This species possesses the essential characters of the genus *Nesospiza* as propounded by Cabanis (Journ. für Orn. 1873, p. 154). It is a larger bird than the type (*N. acunhæ*); it has a longer and more slender bill, in which the culmen is more arched and the keel of the mandible straighter; and the third primary is slightly the longest.

*Adult Male.* General colour bright olive-green, slightly washed with silvery grey; centre of abdomen, under tail-coverts, a stripe from the forehead over and behind the eye, and a malar stripe olive-yellow; chin, throat, and lores black; primaries and secondaries slate-grey, with silvery-grey tips and bright olive-green margins, and their under surfaces broadly margined with silvery grey on the inner webs; under-wing-coverts grey washed with yellowish green; central pair of rectrices olive-green, the rest grey edged and slightly washed with green. Bill and feet, in life, clove-brown. Wing 4·15 inches, tail 3·68, tarsus 1·18, culmen ·71.

This is probably the summer plumage.

*Adult Female.* Resembles the male, but is not so brightly coloured, being dull green. Chin, throat, and lores dusky, and, with the buff stripes over the eye and on the malar region, inconspicuous; feathers of the back and outer margins of secondaries slightly fringed with reddish brown;

secondaries and tertials tipped with greyish buff; flanks faintly washed with brown; middle of abdomen and under tail-coverts buff; central rectrices dull green, the next edged with buff and the outermost with green. Wing 4·0 inches, tail 3·5, tarsus 1·15, culmen ·68.

? *Adult in Winter Plumage.* Pileum and hind-neck olive-grey; back tawny olive, broadly striped with black on the interscapular region; upper surface, wing-coverts, and tail washed with sage-green; primaries narrowly edged outwardly with brown; secondaries broadly margined with sage-green and tawny olive; under parts greyish green, washed with tawny olive on the breast and flanks and passing into buff on the lower abdomen and tail-coverts.

This specimen is unfortunately unsexed, but, since the yellow stripes on the head and the black on the throat and lores are brighter than in the female, it is probably a male.

I have ventured to suggest that this bird is an adult in winter plumage, taking my cue from the fact that a somewhat analogous seasonal change is to be found in the male of *Phrygilus melanoderus* of the Falklands. I may mention that the adult male of *N. goughensis* bears a strong resemblance\* in colour and markings to the adult male of *P. xanthogrammus* of the Falklands, in which apparently the various stages of plumage are as yet incompletely known, as are also, unfortunately, those of *Nesospiza acunhae*.

These Buntings, with those next to be described, were captured on the low ground bordering the landing-place, where they were mostly observed hopping about on the boulders, stranded wood, and seaweed, a little above high-water mark. They were not so tame as to permit themselves to be caught, but readily allowed an approach to within two or three yards, and then flitted off to a short distance. They were not observed in the ravine running inland, nor on its steep sides.

\* See Gould's figure in Darwin's "Voyage of the 'Beagle'": Birds, plate 33.

Mr. Comer (Verrill, *t. c.* p. 463), alluding to these birds, says that small birds, like Sparrows, are very common at Gough Island, and are of two kinds—one slatish above, yellowish beneath, and with a round black spot on the breast: the other much like the first, but lacking the black spot; possibly it is the female. Of their habits he merely remarks that they are very tame and sing.

2. *NESOSPIZA JESSIE.* (Plate VI. fig. 1.)

*Nesospiza jessie*, Eagle Clarke, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, xv. p. 18.

*Male and Female.* General colour orange-buff (brighter on the lower back), streaked with black on the head, back, scapulars, lesser wing-coverts, breast, and flanks; primaries blackish, narrowly edged with dull yellow; secondaries and wing-coverts blackish, broadly edged externally with buff; rectrices with dusky centres and broad buff margins. Bill and feet blackish. Wing 4·05 inches, tail 3·45, tarsus 1·2, culmen 0·65.

In this form the culmen is nearly straight, the gonys is ascending, the first primary is equal to the sixth, and the tail-feathers are lanceolate. In all these respects it differs from *N. goughensis*.

I at first thought that we had in these buff specimens the female and young of the green *N. goughensis*, but on dissecting specimens it was found that the green birds were of both sexes. There then remained the possibility of the buff birds being the young of *N. goughensis*, though differing remarkably in plumage from either parent. An examination of the material, however, disclosed the fact that, although identical in plumage, some specimens were unmistakably immature, while others possessed characters which I interpreted as indications of maturity. In these examples the tendons of the feet were ossified or partially ossified, the fibula was fused to the tibia, and the claws were well-worn. In this connection it is important to remember that, if all young, these birds could only vary a few weeks in their respective ages, for they were obtained in the autumn and hence must be "birds of the year." This evidence, and the

other peculiarities alluded to wherein *N. jessiae* differs from *N. goughensis*, led me to depart from my first impressions regarding the relationship of these forms to each other and to consider them distinct species. I may have been mistaken in so doing, but I think it best to leave it an open question—one to be decided by further investigations based upon a more complete set of specimens.

Judging from Mr. Comer's rough descriptions of the Passerines, he does not seem to have observed this form, and yet he remained on the island down to the very end of summer, when young birds must have been in evidence. We must remember, however, that his observations were not published till some six years after he had left Gough Island, and therefore much that he has told us may have probably been from memory.

### 3. PORPHYRIORNIS COMERI Allen.

The flightless Gallinule peculiar to this island was abundant in the dense undergrowth along the sides of the stream. Among this it endeavoured to hide, but its brilliantly coloured bill and feet easily betrayed it. The specimens captured were secured whilst running amongst this thick mass of vegetation. One ran into a burrow in its endeavours to escape, and it is probable that others resorted to similar tactics.

Five specimens were secured, one of which is an immature bird, though full-grown so far as size is concerned. In this undescribed phase the bill and the frontal shield, which is small, are dull olive-green, and the tarsus and toes dull oil-green. It also varies in plumage from the adult, having the upper surface a warm vandyke-brown, a little darker on the head and primaries; the under surface strongly washed with sepia-brown; the flanks brown, two or three of the feathers on each side having short inconspicuous cinnamon stripes; the outer margin of the first primary cinnamon-buff; the edge of the wing streaked with greyish white; the feathers of the lower part of the abdomen edged with greyish white.

In the adult specimens the frontal shield and the basal

two-thirds of the bill are deep coral-red, the distal third of the bill bright yellow. The exposed portion of the tibia is deep coral-red. Tarsus and toes bright yellow, the former irregularly blotched with coral-red, while a narrow line of the same colour runs along the sides of the latter. The amount of yellow and red varies much in different specimens and in some the red predominates. The iris is crimson. The wing-measurement of the adults varies from 5·3 to 5·95 inches, in the young specimens it is 5·5 inches.

In form and in the colour of its plumage this bird very closely resembles our familiar Waterhen (*Gallinula chloropus*). The bill and frontal shield are larger and the feet more robust.

Regarding the habits of this bird, which he calls the "Mountain Cock," Mr. Comer (Verrill, *t. c.* pp. 434-435) states that they "cannot fly and only use their wings to help them in running. . . . They are quite plentiful and can be caught by hand. . . . The bushes grow on the island up to about 2000 feet, and these birds are found as far as the bushes grow. I do not know how many eggs they lay. . . . When alarmed, their note is a shrill whistle. They eat the eggs of other birds and also follow the tide down to feed on small animals left by the receding waves, but are careful never to go into salt water . . . . but are very fond of getting into fresh water and splashing it over them. . . . They run swiftly when pursued, helping themselves with their wings, and endeavour to get under a tussock, or some such place, to hide. . . . They have a very peculiar habit of always hopping *over* every obstacle, such as a branch or dead stick, instead of going under it as might be expected."

This species differs from *P. nesiotis*, of Tristan da Cunha, in having scarcely any white on the outer edge of the first primary and in the narrower and smaller streaks of white on the flanks.

#### 4. STERNA VITTATA Gmelin.

There are five specimens of this Tern in the collection. One of these is an adult, and the rest are in the pretty first

plumage, in which the back is strongly barred with buff and black, and the buff fore-neck finely dusted with grey. In the young birds in life the bill is brownish black and the feet pinkish brown. Many of these Terns were seen in the vicinity of the island.

Mr. Comer describes this bird as not uncommon at Gough Island, but makes no mention of its breeding there. It has been recorded from Tristan da Cunha.

5. [ANOUS STOLIDUS (Linn.).

This Noddy was apparently not observed by the members of the Expedition. Mr. Comer's collection contained a specimen from Gough Island, and he remarks "quite a number here" (Verrill, *t. c.* p. 452). It occurs and nests at Tristan da Cunha.]

[LARUS DOMINICANUS Licht.

This Gull is included in Verrill's lists (*t. c.* pp. 450 & 464) for Gough Island, but no specimens appear to have been obtained there. Mr. Comer remarks that there were "a very few Sea-Gulls; do not think there were more than six around the island." These remarks are supposed by Verrill to refer to this species. It did not come under the notice of the Scottish naturalists, nor does it seem to have been observed at Tristan da Cunha.]

6. MEGALESTRIS ANTARCTICA (Lesson).

Many Skuas were observed off the island, and two specimens were added to the collection—probably birds of the year, since they shew rufous markings on the mantle, neck, and lesser wing-coverts.

Under the name of "Sea-Hen," Mr. Comer (Verrill, *t. c.* pp. 450 & 464) describes them as being "quite plentiful," and commencing to lay at the middle of September. "When the Penguins lay, the Sea-Hens come ashore in large numbers, and get their living by robbing the nests and catching the young Penguins. They also kill the young Albatroses, and all the small birds they can catch." Mr. Comer killed about 300 of these birds at Gough Island for the sake of their feathers.

This is also a common bird at Tristan da Cunha.

7. OCEANITES OCEANICUS (Kuhl).

Wilson's Petrel, together with *Cymodroma grallaria*, was observed in some numbers in the vicinity of the island. One specimen was obtained, but another which had been shot was carried off by a Skua ere it could be retrieved. Although this species has a remarkably wide range and occurs in the Atlantic as far north as the European and North-American coasts, it has not yet been recorded for Tristan da Cunha, and did not come under the notice of, or was not identified by, Mr. Comer at Gough Island.

8. CYMODROMA GRALLARIA (Vieillot).

This species was observed off the island along with Wilson's Petrel, and was the more numerous of the two. Several examples were obtained and are in the collection.

Though widely distributed in the southern oceans, it does not seem to have been hitherto observed at the Tristan da Cunha group or at Gough Island.

9. PUFFINUS ASSIMILIS Gould.

The collection contains a pair of these birds which Dr. Pirie captured in a deep nesting-hole on the steep grass-covered bank flanking the side of the ravine, his attention being drawn to them by their loud croakings. Similar burrows were extremely numerous, in fact the bank was honeycombed with them; and numbers of the birds were seen off the island. Basal half of the bill pale blue, distal part and nasal tubes black. Front of tarsus and toes greyish blue, posterior portion of tarsus and sides of toes black, webs yellowish.

This species does not appear to have been previously recorded from Gough Island, or from any of the islands of the Tristan group or their neighbourhood.

10. PRIOFINUS CINEREUS (Gmelin).

There are three specimens of this bird in the collection, all of which have the feathers of the back, upper tail-coverts, and wing-coverts edged with paler grey than the rest of their exposed portions. In life the maxilla is dull pea-green,

the nostrils, culmen, and unguis are black; the mandible with apical plate and cutting-edge is black, the lower plate is pea-green. The tarsus and toes are pinkish grey, darker or blackish at the joints, the webs yellowish. In two of the skins the feet are yellow.

A considerable number of these "grey-bodied Petrels, skin No. 9," were seen in the immediate vicinity of the island.

This species has not a place in Verrill's list for Gough Island, nor did it come under the notice of the 'Challenger' naturalists at Tristan da Cunha, but Carmichael (*t. c. p. 497*) records it under the name of *Procellaria cinerea* for the group.

#### 11. MAJAEUS ÆQUINOCTIALIS (Linn.).

One specimen was obtained, skin "No. 20, Gough Island," and similar "Black Petrels" are recorded as having been observed. In the example obtained the bill was yellowish, with the basal part of the culmicorn, its margins contiguous to the latericorn, and its tip black; the distal plate and the narrow median plate of the mandible black.

This species does not appear to have been recorded hitherto from any of the islands of the Tristan group.

#### 12. ÆSTRELATA MOLLIS (Gould).

A great number of "Black-backed Petrels (skin No. 14)" were observed off the island, and three examples which were secured are in the collection. In these specimens the bill was black, the tarsus and basal half of the inner toe and of both webs were pinkish white, the rest of the foot was deep brown.

This species was not represented among the birds collected at Gough Island by Mr. Comer and is not included in Verrill's list; but I think that it is probably the unknown species there alluded to under the name of "Paddy unker," a "dark bird with white breast and white feet," of which there is one egg, measuring  $2.37 \times 1.64$  inches, in Mr. Comer's collection (Verrill, *t. c. p. 449*).

*Æ. mollis* has been recorded from Nightingale Island of the Tristan da Cunha group (Salvin, Voy. 'Challenger,' Zool. ii. pt. viii. p. 144).



## 13. [CESTRELATA LESSONI (Garrot).

Mr. Comer's collection contained an example from Kerguelen, and he states (Verrill, *t. c.* pp. 448-464) that this "mutton-bird" was also common at Gough Island. No specimens were, however, obtained there, nor has the bird been recorded from Tristan da Cunha.]

## 11. OSSIFRAGA GIGANTEA (Gmelin).

Many "Nellies" were observed off the island, and one example, a female, was obtained—a remarkably dark specimen, without a trace of brown, its plumage being throughout deep slaty grey, each feather (except the remiges, the greater wing-coverts, and the tail) terminally or subterminally margined with a slightly paler tint.

The Giant Petrel breeds at Gough Island, where Mr. Comer (Verrill, *t. c.* pp. 447-8 & 464) says that it is not numerous and commences to lay at the middle of September. He tells us that it enters the Penguin "rookeries" and carries off the young to eat, and also pulls birds [Petrels] out of holes in the ground. This destructive species also breeds at Tristan da Cunha.

## 15. PRION VITTATUS (Gmelin).

There is only one specimen in the collection, and this is seemingly a large example, for the wing measures 8·7 inches. The lower plate of the mandible was pale blue, and the remainder of the bill black. Tarsus and toes cobalt-blue, webs black.

Great numbers of "Blue Petrels or Whale-birds" were also seen, and other specimens which were shot were carried off by Skuas ere they could be picked up from the water.

This *Prion* has not a place in Verrill's list for Gough Island; but as "*Procellaria vittata*" it is included in the Ornis of Tristan by Carmichael (*t. c.* p. 497), and Wyville Thomson (*t. c.* p. 177) mentions it as a breeding-species on Inaccessible Island.

## 16. [PRION DESOLATUS (Gmelin).

Mr. Comer obtained skins of this bird at Kerguelen and remarks (Verrill, *t. c.* p. 449) that it is also found at Gough

Island, but he does not appear to have brought back specimens procured there. Salvin (Cat. B. xxv. p. 435) says that it is found between 35° and 60° S.; but it has not, so far as I am aware, been recorded from Tristan da Cunha.]

#### 17. PELECANOIDES URINATRIX (Gm.).

The collection contains a single example which was captured from the 'Scotia' while her party of explorers was ashore on the 22nd of April, 1904. According to a coloured drawing, made at the time of capture, the tarsus and toes in life are cobalt-blue and the webs and claws black.

No *Pelecanoides* has hitherto been recorded, I believe, for any of the islands of the Tristan group; and if we follow Salvin and regard *P. urinatrix* and *P. exsul* as distinct, then a very considerable extension eastwards of the range of this species is indicated by its occurrence at Gough Island, for it does not appear to have been previously obtained in the South Atlantic elsewhere than at the Falkland Islands. It is even possible that it breeds at Gough Island, for Verrill (*t. c.* p. 449) mentions under this species that there is an egg obtained there in Mr. Comer's collection which is "supposed" to be that of a "Diver." This egg measures 1.57 × 1.6 inch as against 1.54 × 1.26 and 1.52 × 1.23 for eggs of *Pelecanoides* obtained by Mr. Comer, together with skins, at Kerguelen, and hence the *P. exsul* of Salvin (*t. c.* p. 438).

#### 18. DIOMEDEA EXULANS Linn.

Many Albatroses of this species were observed around the 'Scotia' as she lay off the island from the 21st to 23rd of April, but no specimens were obtained.

Mr. Comer (Verrill, *t. c.* p. 437) says that this species is common at Gough Island and breeds there. It commenced to lay at the end of December; he obtained the first eggs on the 26th of that month, and found them quite plentiful by the 3rd of January. The young, he says, must be ten months old before they can fly, and not more than five per cent. live to leave their nests; they are killed by the Skuas and Giant Petrels. Mr. Comer considers that the Gough Island race is smaller than those from the other

islands (South Georgia and Kerguelen), and his statements are borne out, according to Verrill, by both specimens and eggs.

[DIOMEDEA MELANOPHRYS Temm.

The occurrence of this species must be regarded as doubtful. Mr. Wilton records it in his Log as being abundant off the island on the 21st of April. No specimens of this Albatros are, however, in the collection, nor are they mentioned as having been obtained. The species is not included in Verrill's list, based upon Mr. Comer's material and observations; nor does it appear to have been recorded from Tristan da Cunha.]

19. [THALASSOGERON EXIMIUS Verrill.

This was described as a new species by Verrill (*t. c.* pp. 410-415), being founded on a skin and skeleton which were obtained, together with 75 eggs, at Gough Island by Mr. Comer.

It is described as similar in plumage to *T. chlororhynchus*, but the mandible lacks the transverse yellow bar at its base and is entirely black (except at the extreme outer end, where it is tipped with light horn-colour). The bright yellow of the culmen deepens and brightens into orange in the middle and finally into dull red on the margins, growing paler towards the tip.

Mr. Comer says that there is but one kind of "Molly-Mawk" on Gough Island, which is known as the Blue-head. The birds lay their eggs separately, keeping well apart, and are scattered about the island among the tussocks and brakes. They commence to lay on the 20th of September, and their nests are like those of *D. exulans*, only smaller.

It is possible that some of the birds recorded by Mr. Wilton as *Diomedea melanophrys* (but of which no specimens appear to have been obtained) and as being numerous off the island during the stay of the 'Scotia' were of this species.]

20. THALASSOGERON sp. inc.

There is in the collection a single specimen of a "Molly-Mawk" of great interest, since it does not entirely agree with the description of any known species.

I was inclined to think that it might be an immature example of *T. chlororhynchus* in a phase of plumage which, if known, is not described by Salvin (*t. c.* pp. 451-2). It differs, however, from the mature bird of that species in having the bill shorter and entirely black, and the toes much shorter. Its dimensions are: wing 18.2 inches, tarsus 3.0, middle toe 3.5, outer toe 3.2, inner toe 2.3, and culmen 4.75.

This bird was captured under somewhat singular circumstances. Dr. Harvey Pirie was proceeding up the ravine (shown in text-fig. 18, p. 251), when he came upon it on the top of a mass of tussock-grass on which it had alighted, but from which it could not rise on the wing again. It was apparently quite uninjured, and could only have been there a few minutes, for other members of the party had passed the spot only a little in advance, and could not have failed to see the bird had it been there, as the ravine is particularly narrow at the point where it was found. This curious incident might be explained on the supposition that it was a young bird essaying to reach the sea from its inland nursery which had halted by the way. Mr. Comer tells us that the young of *Diomedea exulans* do not fly until they are ten months old; and if this holds good even for a lesser period in other species it would help to explain the date and the peculiar circumstances under which this specimen was found away from the sea.

Mr. Rothschild and Dr. Hartert, who have examined the specimen, tell me that it resembles *T. carteri*, recently described by Mr. Rothschild (Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, xiv. p. 6) from a single example which came ashore with an injured wing at Point Cloates, N.W. Australia, and that the Gough Island bird only differs in having the toes nearly .75 inch shorter, and in having the hind-neck washed with grey instead of being white. As regards my suggestion that the specimen under consideration may possibly be immature, Dr. Hartert remarks that he finds nothing to shew that other Albatroses have the bill black in the young, and, moreover, that such an example would hardly have a face with pure white sides.

## 21. PHÆBETRIA FULIGINOSA (Gmelin).

A typical specimen of the Sooty Albatros is in the collection, and many others were seen, with lesser numbers of Hutton's Albatros (*P. cornicoides*), around the 'Scotia' as she lay off the island.

Mr. Comer (Verrill, *t. c.* pp. 445 & 464) describes the species breeding at Gough Island as having the beak dark with "a yellow stripe on each side." It is common but does not breed in "rookeries"; it places its nests separately on cliffs or projecting rocks, where it is most difficult to get at them. The bird commences to lay by the middle of September, and, while sitting, keeps up a continual cry similar to that of a young goat.

This is probably the form which also nests at Tristan da Cunha, for Capt. Carmichael (*t. c.* p. 489) alludes to the bird as the "Black" Albatros (*Diomedea fuliginosa*) and describes its breeding-habits.

## 22. PHÆBETRIA CORNICOIDES Hutton.

I think that there can be little doubt of this being a distinct species. It was only imperfectly described by Capt. Hutton ('Ibis,' 1867, p. 192), from specimens observed at sea, and as a variety of *P. fuliginosa*.

In a letter dated January 4th, 1905, Capt. Hutton tells me that this form has the "back and breast grey, head and neck sooty brown," and that his statement about the mark on the mandible being white was an error. As we now know, this mandibular stripe is pale blue and much smaller than in *P. fuliginosa*.

Salvin (*t. c.* p. 454) says, "if these birds can be traced to a definite breeding-place where they alone are found, it would be well to assign them specific rank." This Capt. Hutton has done, for he tells me that it is the common form in New Zealand, and "breeds at the Auckland Islands and Antipodes at the end of October," but that he does not recollect ever having seen the sooty form in New Zealand. That *P. fuliginosa* alone, so far as our present information goes, breeds at Gough Island and

Tristan da Cunha has already been mentioned under that species, and this affords additional evidence in favour of the specific difference of the two forms.

This species was, however, observed off Gough Island by the Scottish Expedition in somewhat less numbers than the last, but no specimens were obtained there.

### 23. EUDYPTES CHRYSOCOME (Forster).

Several Rock-hopper Penguins were seen ashore, but at places where they could not be reached. Two skeletons, with some feathers still adhering to them, were found on the beach where the landing was effected, and were secured.

At Gough Island, Mr. Comer says (Verrill, *t. c.* p. 462), there is no other kind of Penguin. They "number millions" and commence to lay by the 15th of September. This is the only species of Penguin found at Tristan da Cunha, where it breeds on all three islands.

In addition to the three endemic land-birds, to which special allusion has already been made, the following marine species have been recorded for the Tristan da Cunha Isles which have not been observed or obtained at Gough Island, namely :—*Anous melanogenys*, *Pelagodroma marina*, and *Daption capeusis*, which Moseley (*op. cit.* p. 134) says breeds there !

## XXII.—Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.

[Continued from p. 135.]

### 32. Andersen on the Birds of the Færoe Islands.

[Meddelelser om Færoernes Fugle. 6te Række. Ved Knud Andersen. Vidensk. Meddel. Khvn. 1895, p. 53.]

Mr. Andersen continues his notes on the birds of the Færoe Islands (see 'Ibis,' 1903, p. 248)—a group which, situated halfway between Great Britain and Iceland, is of much interest to English ornithologists, though comparatively seldom visited by them. The birds, however, appear to be well watched by the native observers, whose notes are here given, put together in methodical order. They relate to 103 species.